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FM AMEMBASSY TIRANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4385  
INFO RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE  
RUEHTH/AMEMBASSY ATHENS 2926  
RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE 2723  
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN 1136  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1195  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 1086  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 5291  
RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO 0440  
RUEHSQ/AMEMBASSY SKOPJE 4119  
RUEHVB/AMEMBASSY ZAGREB 2945  
RUFNPKB/COMUSNAVEUR NAPLES IT  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC  
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE  
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RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2163  
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA 3425

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NSC FOR BRAUN

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SUBJECT: ALBANIA WILL FOLLOW UN/EU POSITIONS IN OIC

Classified By: Ambassador Marcie B. Ries for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) During a May 31 meeting, chief of the UN section at the MFA Repishti stressed that Albania was formally alerting the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC) that it would follow UN and/or EU official positions on most issues considered by the OIC.

¶2. (SBU) Albania joined the OIC in 1992. After the 1997 crisis, the Socialist Government quietly diminished Albania's involvement in the OIC, sending only Ministers or Deputy Ministers to the OIC's heads of state meetings or just their local ambassador to OIC ministerials. Albania's parliament has never actually ratified its membership in the OIC.

¶3. (C) Albania's membership in the OIC has occasionally been raised by the Opposition, which tries to paint PM Berisha as more pro-Arab than pro-Western. In this context, FM Mustafaj asked Ambassador last fall for her views on Albania remaining in the OIC. Ambassador replied that while membership in an international organization was certainly a national decision, the U.S. saw merit in the OIC having moderate, responsible members.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: It appears that the GoA wants to officially distance itself -- in advance -- from radical proposals or resolutions, a position underscored by Repishti's additional comment that the GoA would probably only substantively participate in OIC discussions concerning Cyprus and perhaps "the Middle East." Their decision would also seem to indicate that Albania plans to stay in the OIC. We have heard from USUN that in the past, Albania's Ambassador provided useful information about OIC activities. We would hope that this kind of cooperation would continue.  
RIES